

Third Wheels and Ferris Wheels by **Luddleston**

Category: Mass Effect

Genre: F/M, Fluff, M/M, Modern AU, romance movie tropes, super cliché
ok

Language: English

Characters: Female Shepard (Mass Effect), Garrus Vakarian, James Vega, Kaidan Alenko

Relationships: Kaidan Alenko/James Vega, Side Shepard/Garrus

Status: Completed

Published: 2016-03-05

Updated: 2016-03-05

Packaged: 2022-12-19 11:33:26

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,248

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

James shouldn't have gone to the carnival with Shepard and Garrus. He's just been watching them be a disgusting couple the entire time, and really, he doesn't want to remind himself that they're banging.

Good thing there's a hot security guard taking a break to ride the ferris wheel.

Third Wheels and Ferris Wheels

Author's Note:

- For [SizzlyCrisp](#).

This is what I do in Rome.

In other news, I am all aboard this trash ship, riding this train straight into rarepair hell. Join me! It's great in here! Also this entire fic exists for the last line specifically. Which seem to be a trend with my ME writing.

James thought this was going to be fun.

A nice evening with his friends, visiting the carnival that was in town for the weekend, maybe winning some oversized stuffed animal in an effort to impress Shepard... Yeah, he thought it was going to be fun. After all, what's not to enjoy about eating fried everything and riding on wooden roller coasters that were probably unsafe by any logical standards?

And this year, he wasn't even going to ride the huge spinning thing that always made him puke and ruin it for everyone.

At the last minute, though, Miranda bailed out, Cortez got called in for work, Liara had to study, and Wrex just didn't answer his phone, so he may or may not have known about the whole thing in the first place.

That's how James ended up third-wheeling it *hard* with Shepard and Garrus. Sure, he knew they liked each other and had been kind-of-sort-of-not-really a thing for the past few years, but come *on*. Did they have to be all cutesy and shit like that? James found himself rolling his eyes at them when their backs were turned. What kind of person shared their fried Oreo on a stick? What kind of disgusting couple shared them and then *giggled* when they accidentally bumped lips?

James liked the two of them, he really did. He just liked them better when Shepard was kicking his ass on the mat and Garrus was telling him old war stories over a beer. Not when they were holding hands and Garrus was leaning over to whisper in her ear and explain exactly how each of the carnival games was rigged.

He frowned and ate his fried Oreo on a stick very angrily. He was contemplating ways to make them stop being annoying, but all of his methods involved ridiculous comedy-movie hijinks or a hacksaw.

He looked up. Garrus and Shepard were talking to him.

“Huh?” He said it with his mouth still half-full of fried Oreo.

“We were saying we should go on the ferris wheel,” Shepard repeated.

“Oh. Cool.” He liked ferris wheels. He liked being taller than everything else, and he especially liked them at night, when he could see the whole place spread out below him.

So, they made their way for the enormous ferris wheel. How did humans even think of these things, Garrus was asking. James kind of wondered whose idea it was to set up a huge spinning wheel on spokes and strap people into it for fun.

He was pretty sure that if ferris wheels weren’t around when he was alive, he would have invented them.

James remembered, as they reached the front of the line, that the seats were paired, which meant, of course, that he’d be by himself, with Shepard and Garrus making out in the next seat up.

Joy of all joys. He just hoped he wouldn’t be at an angle where he could see anything. He didn’t even want to know what them making out looked like.

When they reached the front of the line, Shepard didn’t even bother to act like she was sorry for separating herself and Garrus from him. James

understood. He'd want to make out with Shepard if he was dating her. "Yeah, it's cool, I'll just ride by myself," he said.

He did not end up riding by himself.

The guy running the ferris wheel, a teenager who looked bored with the entire thing, called out to the people waiting in line to ask if there were any other single riders. And someone must have responded, because moments later, a dark-haired guy was getting on next to James.

"Hey, sorry if you were trying to get a single," he said, taking the seat next to James, "the guy running it really wanted to fill up the whole thing."

His voice.

His *voice*.

It was like a good red wine, dry and rich and oh, damn, he was hot. James liked the way his hair was slicked back, liked the way his black T-shirt fit tight to his body—muscled, but not as much as James, and shit, he hadn't answered yet.

"Uh, yeah, no big deal. I'm just like, third-wheeling with my friends," he said. "They're up there." He pointed at the next seat above them.

"Oh, that's kind of lame of them," he said. "I'm Kaidan, by the way."

"James," he said. They shook hands. Kaidan's palms were warm.

"I hope to god I don't see their seat start shaking," James said. Kaidan laughed. Fuck. His laugh was even cute, a little breathy but from deep in his chest. He licked his lips. James was staring.

The ferris wheel started moving and James glanced out the opposite side, trying not to get distracted by the curve of Kaidan's jaw. The ground disappeared below them, the lights of the carnival getting so small they could have been tiny Christmas lights.

Just as they were about to reach the peak, the entire ride shuddered and came to a halt.

Perfect. Just perfect.

Well, James supposed, it could have been worse. Stuck in a small, enclosed space for an undetermined amount of time with a hot guy was an okay way for the evening to end, even if he could hear someone screaming from further below.

“Typical,” Kaidan huffed. “They won’t take too long to get it running.”

“You think?”

He nodded. “Yeah, I’ve been working security for the carnival this weekend. I’m normally a bouncer at a bar, but I’ve been doing this during the day. This happens a lot.”

“Oh?” He could see Kaidan as a bouncer. He was big enough to be intimidating, and looked serious enough to be good at his job. Carnival security at the same time sounded a little insane, but he’d probably look great in a uniform.

“It’s tiring doing both at once,” Kaidan said. “This is my night off from the bar, so I thought I’d actually enjoy the carnival instead of having to deal with finding kids who wandered off or yanking apart teenagers trying to get it on in the tunnel of love.”

James laughed. “That happen often?”

“Oh yeah.”

“Eh, I would’a done it,” he said, “if I was with someone I was really into.”

“You would? I mean, I’d rather make out on the ferris wheel. No one can tell you to cut it out.”

The seat above them rocked ominously. “Looks like you’re not the only one with that idea.”

Kaidan's gaze slid down to meet James'. Shit, James wished he was better at reading people sometimes. His glance looked flirty, but it could've just been the fact that his eyelashes were so thick and dark, it made anything look flirty.

His lips were so full and looked so soft. James wanted to run his tongue along them.

Just as the ride started moving again, Kaidan grabbed the back of James' neck and just fucking went for it.

Shepard and Garrus exited the ride hand-in-hand, pausing to look behind themselves for James. "Where is he?" Garrus asked.

Shepard saw him, still on the ride, laughing with his arm around the guy who must've shared the seat with him. They didn't leave as it started up again, but she saw them lean in to kiss, James' hand low on the guy's back. "He's there," Shepard said, waving an arm in their general direction.

"Is he getting off?" Garrus asked.

Shepard grinned. "Oh, he's about to."